

## **Falling** by RobinPlaysTrumpet15

**Category:** Stranger Things (TV 2016)

**Genre:** Gen, M/M

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Dustin Henderson, Karen Wheeler, Lucas Sinclair, Mike Wheeler, Ted Wheeler, Will Byers

**Relationships:** Will Byers/Mike Wheeler

**Status:** Completed

**Published:** 2018-10-08

**Updated:** 2018-10-08

**Packaged:** 2022-04-23 02:47:43

**Rating:** Teen And Up Audiences

**Warnings:** No Archive Warnings Apply

**Chapters:** 1

**Words:** 2,046

**Publisher:** [archiveofourown.org](https://archiveofourown.org)

**Summary:**

Will finds out what happened at the quarry with Mike and Dustin while he was gone.

# Falling

## Author's Note:

Hey guys! I've been thinking about this a lot. Like, no one talks about this. Mike literally stepped off a cliff with little to no hesitation and probably not even a second thought. That's a problem.

"If your friends jumped off a bridge, would you do it too?"

Mike hated that saying. His father liked to use it a lot, along with the other variations of it. Especially when his father used the word cliff instead of bridge.

One time, Ted had said it in front of Will, Lucas, and Dustin.

Lucas had been briefly informed about the cliff incident at the quarry, but Will had never been told. Not because Mike didn't want him to know... (or maybe he really actually didn't want him to know), but because it just hadn't come up. (That was true too.) Honestly, how often does one actually sit down to talk with their friends about the one time he stepped off a cliff because some bullies were threatening to cut out one of his friends' baby teeth without much of a second thought? Never, that's how often.

Besides, a conversation like that would bring up questions. Questions Mike didn't want to answer or... or think about at all.

But it was dinner and Mike had finished saying something about how "everyone was doing" something or other. He couldn't even think of what it was anymore. Because as soon as he was done speaking, his father came back with his usual rebuttal.

"If everyone went and jumped off the cliff into the quarry, would you?"

The table was deadily silent for a moment. It was the first time Ted had used that particular version of this, and when his son didn't respond with anything, the man got a smug look on his face, going

back to his food, completely unaware of the silent conversation going on between three of the kids at his table.

Dustin's eyes had gone impossibly wide, focusing firmly on Mike, and Mike himself... he just couldn't believe what he'd just heard. Only four people knew about what happened at the quarry, and only two of them cared. The other two were sort of... frightened of them now, as if they could all break Troy's arm the way Eleven had. Just Dustin and Lucas. Lucas also looked vaguely panicked, his eyes darting between Mike and Dustin, and Dustin couldn't do anything but stare at Mike like he might die on the spot.

"Mike?" Karen caught all the boys' attention.

"Y-yeah, Mom," Mike said. "I know, I know... Just because everyone does it doesn't mean I should."

"Good."

The rest of dinner was quiet. As soon as the boys were released to their own devices, the four of them bolted down stairs to the basement. The door at the top of the stairs was slammed shut behind Mike and they gathered around the table in front of the couch.

"Mike," Dustin started. Mike cut him off with a harsh wave of his hand.

He stepped away from the table and began pacing a few feet back and forth, again and again. It went on for a few moments before the silence was cut.

"What... what's going on?" Will asked. Mike froze in his tracks, turning and facing the other three boys still around the table.

Will looked so confused. His eyes were roaming between his friends, but mainly focused on Mike, sure he could see something... Sure that there was something wrong with his best friend. His hazel green eyes looked worried, his eyebrows scrunched together and a vague frown on his lips.

"Mike? Mike, did you hear me?" Will asked. Mike could only stare at him.

What was he supposed to do? God, what would Will say if he knew Mike had willingly and almost without hesitation thrown himself off the edge of a cliff? The same cliff that they had been told earlier in the week Will must have fallen off of... Will would... Oh he would...

That would break his heart.

But so would lying to him.

"Mike, what's going on? Something's wrong--"

"Mike," Dustin cut in. "Just tell him, man."

Will turned to Dustin, fear in his eyes. "Tell me what?"

Mike couldn't seem to get words to form on his tongue. None even came to mind. How could he tell Will something like this?

"What are you not telling me?" Will demanded.

Lucas tried to say something, but Will's voice drowned him out.

"Why does everyone else know what's going on, and I don't?" Will asked, turning his eyes back to Mike. "Is it because of November? Is it because of the Upside Down? Because you guys think I'm not strong enough?"

"Will..." Mike tried. Just his friend's name. That's all. The only thing he could come up with.

"Will what?" Will asked, leaving his spot at the table and walking around Dustin to come face to face with Mike. "What, Mike?"

Mike's eyes shifted away, gaze stopping on a few things around the floor and then coming back to Will's face and leaving again.

"Mike..." Will's voice was growing quiet again. "You're scaring me..."

Mike sighed. He couldn't talk right now, but he had to do something. So he brought his arms up to wrap around Will, pulling him close against him. Will hugged him back immediately, clinging to Mike like

a lifeline. They had done this several times in the past few months, and it felt perfectly natural, even with Lucas and Dustin watching, both of whom had seen this sort of affection between the two in the past.

“Dustin...” Mike urged quietly, still holding onto Will for a moment.

Will pulled back then, looking up at Mike, even more confused now, because turning to Dustin as the curly haired boy started to speak.

“When you were gone... lots of stuff happened, which you know, of course. But... there might be a thing or two we didn’t tell you... Not because we didn’t trust you or anything! But-”

“Dustin!” Lucas smacked his arm.

“Right, sorry. Anyway... uh, Mike and I were in the woods looking for El but we found Troy and James. They chased us to the quarry and started threatening us. Troy had a knife. He said he would cut out my baby teeth unless Mike jumped off the cliff into the water...”

“What?!” Will exclaimed, turning back to Mike quickly.

Mike took the opportunity to walk over to the couch and fall on it, slumping into the corner. Will followed him after a second and stood next to him. He swallowed hard.

“Okay...?”

Dustin sighed. “Mike walked over to the edge and...”

“You jumped off the cliff?!” Will supplied, very nearly falling to his knees to look Mike in the eye.

Mike nodded almost inattentively. His eyes were unfocused, staring off into space and focused on something on the floor that he wasn’t even paying any attention to. He didn’t want to look at Will. He’d had this... look on his face. It would be a look that Mike hadn’t seen a whole lot. Not since a few years back when Will’s father was still “present” in his life.

“Why?” Will damn near begged the question.

Because Dustin was at risk? Because Troy had a knife? Because Mike would do just about anything for his friends, including defying the police and going out at night in a rain storm to search the woods for his missing friend where they very well could have gotten hurt or taken or a million other things? Because some part of Mike was just genuinely curious what it would be like to free fall like that? Because it had already been one hell of a week so far, or because for a brief time they had been made to think Will was actually dead? Or maybe it was because Will was missing, and they were just kids and what the hell could they possibly do to get their friend back from an alternate dimension that was likely to kill Will, and all told in the end, they were extremely lucky he'd come back at all?

And if he hadn't... then what would be the point of this world if Will wasn't there with them? Their party was perfect the way that it was. They couldn't lose their cleric. They just couldn't.

"Mike!" Will shouted.

Something about Will's tone, and the sheer volume of his voice jolted Mike out of whatever sort of trance he'd been caught in since mid dinner.

"Will, I..." Mike swallowed, trying to unstick his throat. Come on, Will was in distress here! He had to say something! He had to provide some sort of explanation why he would actually jump off a cliff he knew full well could and would kill him. "I had to..."

"I told you not to!" Dustin protested.

Will ignored him. "We all know what Troy's like, Mike, but... he wouldn't actually cut Dustin!"

"Besides," Lucas cut in now, "I'm not sure you actually can use a knife to cut out baby teeth... I don't think it works like that..."

"I had to do something!" Mike argued. "I couldn't bet that he just wouldn't cut him, even if he couldn't do anything to his baby teeth!"

"But you didn't have to jump!" Will yelled.

"YOU WERE DEAD!" Mike yelled above his friends.

In an instant, the basement went deadly silent. Will, who had looked nearly pissed just a split second ago, now looked shocked. His hazel eyes were wide and searching Mike's own dark brown eyes for something. Dustin had a similar look to him, but it was inherently different, somehow. Lucas' too. Will's shock was riddled with fear, a dark understanding that he seemed to be trying to push away, denying the thought until it was confirmed or proved incorrect.

But no one said anything. So Mike supposed it was still his turn.

"We... we knew you were alive, but... We went to your funeral... There was a coffin, and your dad was there, and your mom couldn't even look at us..." Mike's voice was suddenly choked again, and he could feel the tears stinging behind his eyes and welling up, blurring the sight of his best friend. "You were... you were s-stuck in... in that place, and- and what if we c-couldn't get you ba-back?"

Damn hiccups.

Will's eyes were going red, the green in his hazel irises coming out vividly, more than it did on a regular basis.

"If... if you weren't going to come back... If you d-died there, then... what- what would be the p-point?" Mike asked.

It was rhetorical.

But tears spilled down over his cheeks, as well as Will's, and his best friend visibly crumpled in front of him. Will fell into his arms, gripping Mike's shoulders near painfully, but that was okay. Because as upset as they were, something in Mike's chest whispered that everything was alright. That Will was safe and here in front of him, solid in his arms, and he himself was safe in his basement, no free fall drop in his stomach or the imminent collision of cement hard water.

Will was speaking.

And Mike hadn't been listening. Whoops.

"-can't just... just think like that! The party still needs you! I still need you! What if I had come back a-and and and... and you weren't here?! What if I woke up in the hospital and Lucas and Dustin came

in b-ut... but you didn't?"

Will pulled back from Mike about a foot to look at him again. "What if Mom and Jonathan had to tell me that you had died while I was gone?"

Mike didn't say anything, staring at Will with an almost pouting face. He didn't mean to. But what else was he supposed to do?

"Your life doesn't mean that little, Michael Wheeler!" Will cried, a wet, humorless chuckle bubbling out of his throat.

Mike nodded his head, feeling the tears breaking forth again, quicker now. Will leaned back into the hug, his grip not so unforgiving on his best friend anymore, but even if it had been, Mike wouldn't have minded.

Anything, especially the reminder that his best friend, the one person on earth that he was closest with, was okay, was much better than the memory of air rushing past his ears and the feeling of his stomach having been left up on the rock edge.

Will was fine.

And so was Mike.

### **Author's Note:**

Thanks for reading! If you find any mistakes, please let me know so I can go in and fix them. Let me know what you think, thanks!